

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Moab District  
Price River/San Rafael Resource Area  
125 South 600 West  
P.O. Box 7004  
Price, Utah 84501

M/015/041

FEB 22 1996

3809  
(UTU-69860)  
(UT-067)

FEB 20 1996

Anthony A. Gallegos  
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining  
Utah Department of Natural Resources  
355 West North Temple Street  
3 Triad Center  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203

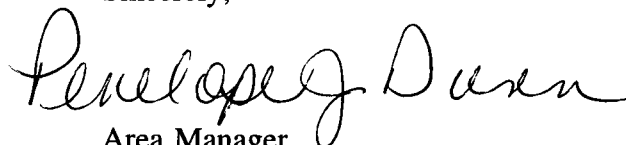
Dear Mr. Gallegos:

We have reviewed the comments submitted by Utah State Clearing House to Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining concerning the DKG gypsum quarry (M/015/041) and the following is our response:

1. Possible historic properties - No cultural and/or historic sites were found in a survey conducted by the Bureau of Land Management on 60 acres of the affected area in June of 1991.
2. Possible impacts to nesting raptors - The San Rafael Resource Management Plan (RMP) states that all permitted activities within 0.5 mile of an active nest site will be restricted during the nesting season from February 1 to August 15 annually. No evidence of any ferruginous hawk nesting sites or any other raptor sites are known to occur within 0.5 mile of the area.
3. Bighorn sheep habitat - The project area is not in any known bighorn sheep habitat, either crucial or yearlong, as defined by the San Rafael RMP(Resource Management Plan). The information used to develop the RMP included input from Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR). The mine area contains gypsiferous soils, with little vegetation growing on them which could be utilized by bighorn sheep. In addition, the area is so far removed from suitable escape cover, it is unlikely that bighorn sheep would use the area.
4. Adding Ladak or Nomad alfalfa to the seed mix - Neither Ladak nor Nomad alfalfa can be grown without irrigation in this area as the precipitation rate is less than 8 inches per year. In addition, our land use planning document, the San Rafael Resource Management Plan, specifically states that native species will be used and exotic species will be used only as a nurse

crop. We believe that neither Ladak nor Nomad alfalfa will be acceptable as a nurse crop under the climatic conditions prevailing at the mine site.

Sincerely,

  
Area Manager